231 [262] for herding or driving cattle and the natives seemed much surprised at the idea. They[1] are not eaten and the idea is considered disgusting, although there is no definite taboo on it. There seemed to be no dogs in many villages and their economic importance is slight.

Cattle are all of the humped or zebu variety, with moderately long sideward curving horns. The size of the hump varies with the animal's age and condition and is hardly noticeable in many cases. There is a great variety of colors and markings, each known by a special name, but black and white seem to predominate. There are said to be a few wild cattle, descendants of escapes, which are very shy and live in the heavy forest.

293 The cattle belonging to each village are herded together by boys, with, in the old days, a few armed men for protection. During the day they are allowed to graze anywhere on land that is lying fallow. At night they are driven into pens, which are now on the outskirts of the villages. In the old days the pens were often in the village and the cattle were driven within the stockade if an attack threatened.

417 The Menabe cattle pens are like large, roughly built houses with thatched roofs and open sides. Among the Ikongo, who live in less rainy territory, the pens are usually open. They are made from posts planted about 2 feet apart and laced together with withes or vines. Two posts, planted one behind the other, stand on each side of the entrance, which is closed by dropping long saplings in between them. Semi-subterranean pens of the plateau type are unknown among the Tanala. The pens are never cleaned and in some I saw the manure had accumulated to a depth of over 3 feet.

422 618 233 The Ikongo have a regular system of ownership marks, made by cutting one or both ears in various patterns. These marks are hereditary in lineages and there are sometimes stories to account for their origin. Families within the lineage usually have no individual marks. The Menabe rarely earmark their cattle, their herds being so small that ownership is never in question.

232 There is no attempt at systematic cattle breeding and it does not seem to have occurred to the natives that their herds could be improved in this way. One informant expressed surprise when I told him of our methods, then said that after all the matter took care of itself, for the best bull would defeat the others and take all the cows.

825 Young bulls are often castrated, but solely with the idea of improving the flesh. A Menabe informant said that two bulls in a herd must always be castrated at the same time, so that they could

[1] [i.e., dogs - Analyst]

1: Linton E-5 (1926-27) 1933 FY8 Tanala FY8



give each other sympathy in their affliction. If one was castrated alone, he would die of grief. The Betsileo have a similar belief, but I could not learn whether it was universal among the Tanala. 825

Most of the Tanala territory is poorly suited to cattle culture because of the heavy forest and constant rain. It is only along the western margin of their lands, where they border on the plateau, that one finds real grazing country. The Tanala herds are usually small and, although cattle have great social significance, they contribute little to the physical well-being of the people. They are only killed in connection with ceremonies, and the average Tanala does not taste beef once a month. Indeed, cattle killings are so rare that to dream of cutting or eating beef is a bad omen, presaging a funeral in the family. Hides are so little used that, until European traders provided a market for them, it was customary to cut up the animals without flaying them and cook meat and skin together. 233● 311 [262] [787] [439]

The Menabe consider milk a luxury, and it is almost impossible to purchase it in their territory. It is a by-product, taken only when the cow seems to have more than enough to feed her calf. Milking, like everything else connected with cattle, is done exclusively by men. The explanation given for this is that it is a dangerous occupation. Actually, it is a laborious process, requiring three persons. One man holds the calf where the cow can see and lick it, another milks, usually squatting on the right side, and a third holds the cow's tail over her back and gently rubs her vagina with his fingers. The milk is boiled at once, while still warm. It is considered disgusting to drink it fresh. After boiling, it is either drunk or cooked with rice. 234 462 [252]

The Ikongo make more use of milk and are somewhat more expert at milking, although they use the same method. They rarely boil their milk. A little is drunk fresh, but most of it is deliberately soured. A little sour milk is always left in the milking gourd so that the new milk turns almost at once. The curds are eaten with a spoon and the whey drunk. None of the Tanala know how to make butter or cheese. 234 252 [264]

Apparently cow's milk was rarely if ever used to supplement or replace mother's milk in feeding nursing infants. The idea has recently been borrowed from Europeans, but it is still considered rather unnatural and is used only as a last resort. 853 177

The wheel and plow were unknown in Madagascar prior to European contact. The Tanala never use their cattle for draught or transport and this holds for the rest of the island, with one or two exceptions. The Imerina and Betsileo now use ox carts and 177 492

177 492 formerly had a few riding oxen. Both of these are due to European contact. The Tsimahety, at the northern end of the plateau, use oxen as pack animals and apparently have done so since pre-European times. The loads are placed in cloth bags, which are slung across the animal behind the hump, one hanging on each side.

●233 556 It is safe to say that if all the cattle belonging to the Tanala Menabe were destroyed over night, no member of the tribe would miss a meal or suffer any other serious hardship. Their loss would be somewhat more serious to the Ikongo, but they would still be able to get along quite well without them. In spite of this lack of practical value, cattle are everywhere of great social importance. [454] With the possible exception of slaves, which no longer exist, they represent the only form of interest-bearing investment possible under native conditions. Every man tries to accumulate as many as possible and his standing in the community is largely determined by [777] the size of his herd. Charms to increase the fertility of cattle are common and cattle are only sold or killed in case of absolute necessity. They are regarded almost as members of the family and the idiosyncrasies of each animal are well known. One informant told me that they are the only animals which possess souls. They are not regarded [782] as sacred, but the killing of an ox, either as a sacrifice or for meat, is an integral part of practically all important ceremonies.

685 556 Although the Tanala consider ordinary theft as one of the most serious of all offenses, cattle stealing is regarded as honorable so long as the members of one's own village are not molested. In fact, it is considered a proper occupation for a young man of spirit and offers an easy road to wealth and advancement. The native attitude is comparable to that of our own Plains Indians toward horse [721] stealing. Cattle formed the most important part of the spoil in warfare and a successful theft was in the nature of a war exploit. European efforts to suppress it have rather heightened the thief's prestige by increasing his hazards.

541 764 Bull baiting and watching fighting bulls were both important sports in pre-European times. They still persist, but are becoming rare. I could get no information on bull baiting among the Ikongo, but it was probably a regular part of important funerals there, as among the Menabe. In the latter group it was customary, in the course of the funeral festivities, to drive up one or two bulls. These were baited by the young men, who would incite them to charge and then avoid their rushes, swing by their tails, leap on their backs, etc. A favorite trick was to await the charge, catch the bull's

426 even to his sons until he thinks he is about to die. Loans and other business transactions involving money are always made publicly, in the presence of witnesses, even when they are between members of the same lineage.

423 In discussing the Tanala ideas of property it is necessary to distinguish at the outset between land and property of all other sorts. To understand the native attitude toward land, the local conditions must be kept in mind. In pre-European times the popula- [36] tion was sparse and apparently almost static. The villages lay far apart, each one surrounded by a great stretch of uninhabited [433] forest. The natural supply of forest products and of land for pasture always exceeded the local needs. Moreover, the *tavy* method of agriculture required that the land be allowed to lie fallow for from five to ten years between plantings. Under such conditions there was little incentive for individual ownership.

423 In pre-European times the ultimate ownership of land was 621 vested in the village. Each village owned a definite territory whose 596 limits were established at the time it was founded. The boundaries were usually rivers, mountain ranges or other natural divisions. [721] The villages were jealous of their rights and serious trespass, such as pasturing cattle or cutting *tavy*, would result in war. Transfer of land between lineages of the same village was permissible and not uncommon, but its sale to outsiders was impossible without the consent of the council. Actually, it was so rare as to be almost unknown.

The ownership of land within the village stockade was vested in the various lineages, except for the *kianza* ("village square"), which was common property. Each lineage owned a ward, which was usually a segment extending from the *kianza* to the stockade (see The Village). If a lineage grew too large for its ward, all the members contributed to buy land from the adjoining lineages. When one or more families withdrew to form a new lineage, the ward was divided.

Among the Menabe, fallow land and virgin jungle were, for all practical purposes, held in common. A villager was entitled to place beehives, set traps and gather timber and forest products [233] on any land which was not in use. Cattle could also be pastured anywhere, those of the entire village usually being kept in a single herd. For agricultural purposes the land was, at least in theory, divided into sectors running from the village to the limits of its territory. Each sector lay in the same direction with regard to